

PLANNING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Former Tirbach Washery, Tirbach Road, Ystalyfera

May 2026

Asbri Planning Ltd
Suite D, 1st Floor
220 High Street
Swansea
SA1 1NW

T: 01792 480535
E: mail@asbriplanning.co.uk
W: asbriplanning.co.uk



Proposal

Outline planning application for the redevelopment of the former Tirbach Washery comprising the construction of up to 160 residential dwellings and associated infrastructure works

Location:

Former Tirbach Washery, Tirbach Road, Ystalyfera

Date:

May 2026

Asbri Project ref:

S19.182

Client:

Mr Robert Maggs

Product of

Asbri Planning Limited
Suite D, 1st Floor
220 High Street
Swansea
SA1 1NW

Disclaimer

This report has been prepared for the sole and exclusive use of client whom it was commissioned and has been prepared in response to their particular requirements and brief. This report may not be relied upon by any other party.

The Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 shall not apply to this report and the provisions of the said Act are expressly excluded from this report. This report may not be used for any purpose other than that for which it was commissioned. This report may not be reproduced and/or made public by print, photocopy, microfilm or any other means without the prior written permission of Asbri Planning Ltd. The conclusions resulting from this study and contained in this report are not necessarily indicative of future conditions or operating practices at or adjacent to the Site. Much of the information presented in this report is based on information provided by others. That information has neither been checked nor verified by Asbri Planning Ltd.

	Prepared by	Approved by
Name	Ella Davies Graduate Planner	Richard Bowen Director
Date	May 2026	May 2026
Revision	C	C



Section 1
Site in Regional Context

Section 2
Introduction

Section 3
Site in Local Context

Section 4
Site Context and Analysis

Section 5
Sustainability Plan

Section 6
Site Photos

Section 7
Mine Entries

Section 8
The Vision and Brief

Section 9
Opportunities and Constraints

Section 10
Interpretation

Section 11
National Planning Policy

Section 12
Local Planning Policy

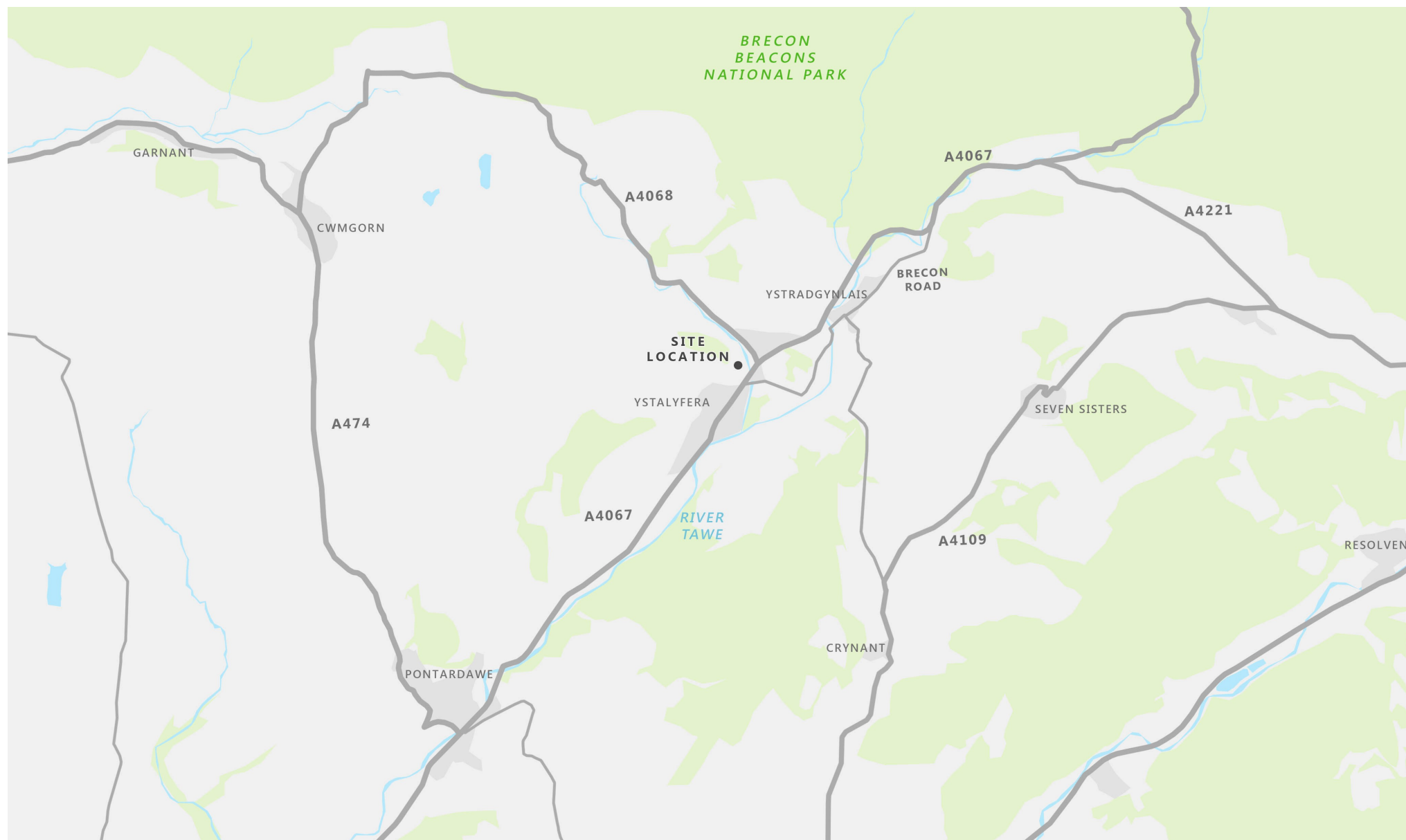
Section 13
Design Evolution

Section 14
The Proposal

Section 15
Perspective Drawings

Section 16
Conclusion

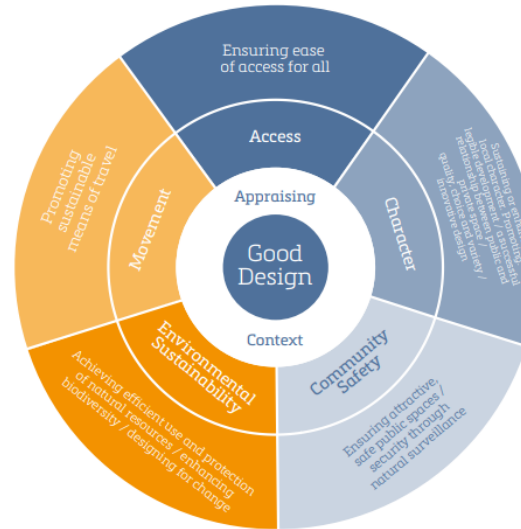
SITE IN REGIONAL CONTEXT



The purpose of a Planning, Design & Access Statement (PDAS) is to provide a clear and logical document to demonstrate and explain the various facets of design and access in relation to the site and to appraise the proposed development against relevant planning policies. It also presents the details of a planning application in a way that can be read both by professionals and the public.

The submitted Planning, Design and Access Statement adheres to guidance embodied in the Welsh Government publication, Design and Access Statements in Wales, published in June 2017.

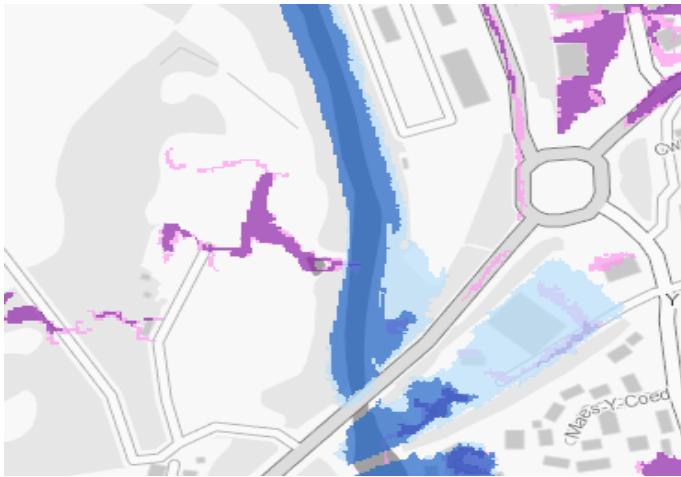
Figure 8: Objectives of Good Design



SITE IN LOCAL CONTEXT



SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS



NRW, Flood Map for Planning



National Cycle Network Route 43, running south of the site

Overview

This section sets out the site's general location and provides a brief description of the application site and its immediate surroundings.

General Location

The site is located within the village of Ystalyfera in the upper Swansea Valley. It lies approximately 23km north-east of Swansea, and approximately 1.7km south-west of Ystradgynlais. It centers on the grid coordinates E: 277144, N: 209463.

Ystalyfera is regarded as a local centre within the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (LDP), situated on the A4067. The site is considered to be in a highly sustainable location. Its location in the context of Ystalyfera is shown on Page 6.

Site Features

The site comprises a parcel of brownfield land and measures approximately 9.56 hectares, of which 6.21 hectares are proposed for the redevelopment.

The site has historically operated as a washery associated with the Tirbach Colliery. Evidence of the former use can be found on-site in the form of the remains of old buildings.

In terms of topography, the site rises sharply along its western boundary, rising above a public footpath with two distinct plateaus towards the northern end. The steeper part of the site will be omitted from any development. Slopes on the site are largely man-made, with the site generally sloping south-eastwards.

Site Context

A review of the Natural Resources Wales Flood Map for Planning reveals the site lies within flood risk with only surface water and small watercourses Zone 2&3. It is

therefore comprises an area known to have flooded in the past. Furthermore, there are parts of the site which are at risk of surface water flooding.

Despite the site's historic use as part of the Tirbach Colliery, a search of Historic Wales interactive map search function revealed that there are no historic assets at the site in respect of listed buildings nor scheduled ancient monuments. The nearest historic asset to the site would be the canal aqueduct over the Afon Twrch, which is Grade II listed. However, it is not anticipated that the proposed development would affect the siting of this historic asset in any way.

Neath Port Talbot Council's LDP Proposals Map shows the site falls within the Developments Limits boundary. It is allocated for residential development of up to 160 units under policy reference: H1/31.

Access

Vehicular access to the site is currently established via the A4067 along the sites south-eastern flank. The arrangement of the existing access was primarily designed to accommodate Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) via a 'haul road', with such vehicles transporting materials onto and off the site. A new access off the A4067 is proposed to serve the development, which is discussed in further detail in Section 10 of this DAS.

Public transport infrastructure is of a good quality, with a bus stop located outside the Tesco Superstore on Wind Road or the health and wellbeing centre on Wern Road/Commercial Street, with service X6 operating at 30-minute intervals providing travel between Ystradgynlais and Swansea.

The sites is positioned on the A4067, therefore it is well placed to achieve connection to the wider highway network, with the road providing a connecting with the M4 Motorway to the south of the site and the Brecon Beacons to the north.

SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

The National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 43 runs parallel to the A4067 to the south of the site, providing a safe route for cyclists within the area. NCN Route 43 connects Swansea with Builth Wells.

Surroundings

The surrounding area comprises a range of residential, industrial and commercial uses. It is largely characterised by two-storey semi-detached residential dwellings. With respect to industrial land uses, Gurnos Industrial Estate is located to the east of the site, across the river. LBS Builders Merchants can be found immediately east of the industrial estate, on Bethel Road.

Commercial development is also prevalent in the area, with Tesco Superstore on Wind Road and Home Bargains off Gurnos Road. Furthermore, there are a variety of independent local commercial enterprises operating within the vicinity of the site.

As shown on the sustainability plan on Page 8, the site is well served in respect to its access to local services and amenities. There is a wealth of services operating in the immediate area surrounding the site including Ystalyfera Health and Wellbeing Centre (600m), convenience store and Post Office (400m) as well as the aforementioned Tesco Superstore (600m) and Home Bargains (400m).

Furthermore, the site is excellently located in terms of access to local schools, such as Ysgol Bro Tawe and Ysgol Gynradd Y Wern primary schools, as well as Ysgol Gyfun Ystylafera, Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn Y Glowyr and Ysgol Maesydderwen Comprehensive school.

Planning History

Although the site has a rich history in respect of its former use as a washery associated with the Tirbach Colliery, in terms of planning history, the site is somewhat limited. The following applications comprise the site's planning history:

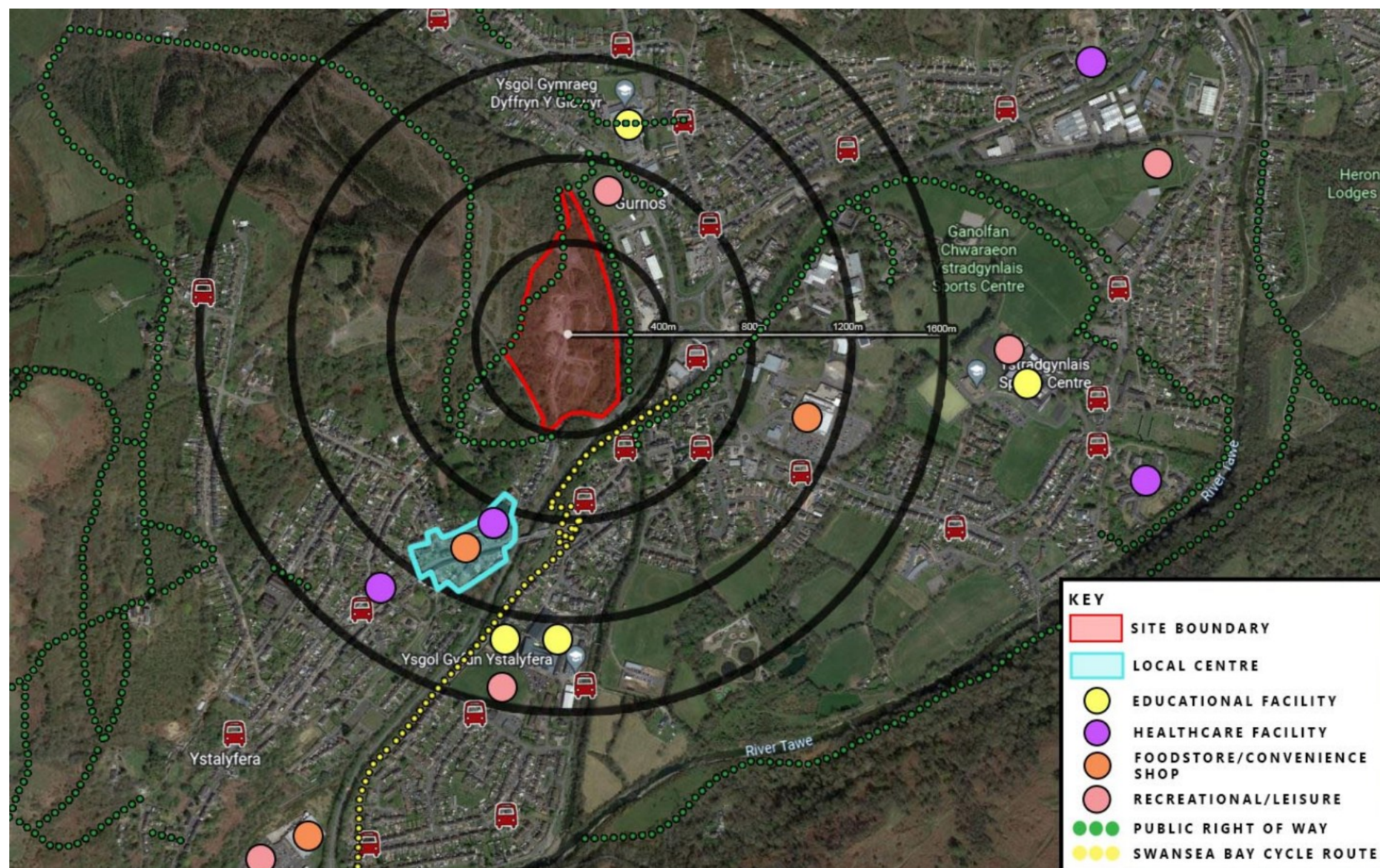
- P2003/1521 – Entrance signs (located on A4067) for Cwm Nant Lleici Quarry.
- P2008/0269 – Retention of motorcycle training track including 4no steel containers for office and storage facilities.
- P2016/1033 – Prior notification of demolition of former office and workshop building.

Pre Application Q2020/0158

A Pre Application was submitted for this application in September 2020 for the proposed redevelopment of the former Tirbach Washery for the construction of up to 160 units (138) residential dwellings, with associated access, car parking and landscaping works .

The principle of development was considered acceptable by the council with the key points raised in waste management, renewable energy, highways, drainage, flooding, noise, land contamination, coal, biodiversity and planning obligations.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN



SITE PHOTOS



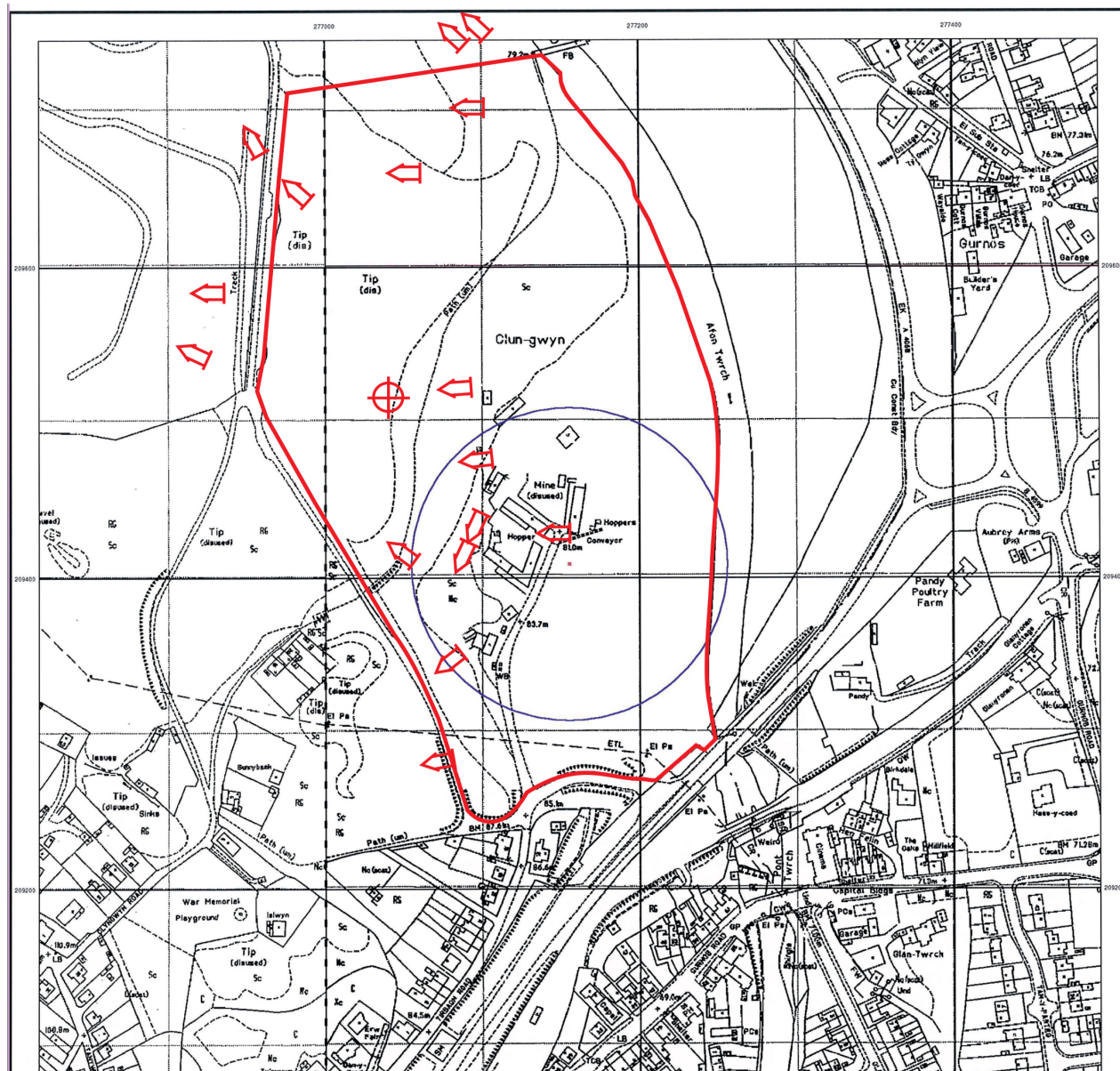
SITE PHOTOS



SITE PHOTOS



MINE ENTRIES



Study on Land at Former Tirbach Washery Site, Ystalyfera.

Plan of Recorded Disused Mine Entries.

Plan Scale: 1:2,500.

Key to Symbols:

- **Approximate Site Boundary.**
 Approximate Position of Disused Shaft.
 Approximate Position of Disused Adit.

Note:
North is at top of plan.

*Locations are approximate
and should not be scaled.*

© Crown Copyright Reserved



Geologists Working With The Environment.....

THE VISION AND BRIEF

The Vision

The vision for the scheme is to create a residential development which will contribute towards the need for a mix of high-quality homes within the locality, maximising the site's regeneration potential and sustainable location.

The site as existing is currently under-utilised and not being used to its full potential. Several buildings and building foundations have been left since the sites previous use as a washery, which are in a poor state of disrepair. The location of the site is conducive to residential development, as it is well served by local services and facilities. A bus stop is located immediately adjacent to the site access.

The proposal will therefore provide up to 160 no. homes in a sustainable location, making effective use of vacant brownfield land. It will lead to the creation of a high-quality and attractive place to live, and will contribute to creating a distinct sense of place whilst respecting the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The Brief

In order to achieve this vision, an extensive amount of vegetation cover would need to be cleared, as well as the removal of buildings and foundations that were associated with the former washery use on-site.

Notwithstanding, this application is for outline planning permission for up to 160 dwellings which aligns with the allocation set out in LDP Policy H1 (Housing Sites). The indicative layout provided includes 104 houses comprising of the following mix:

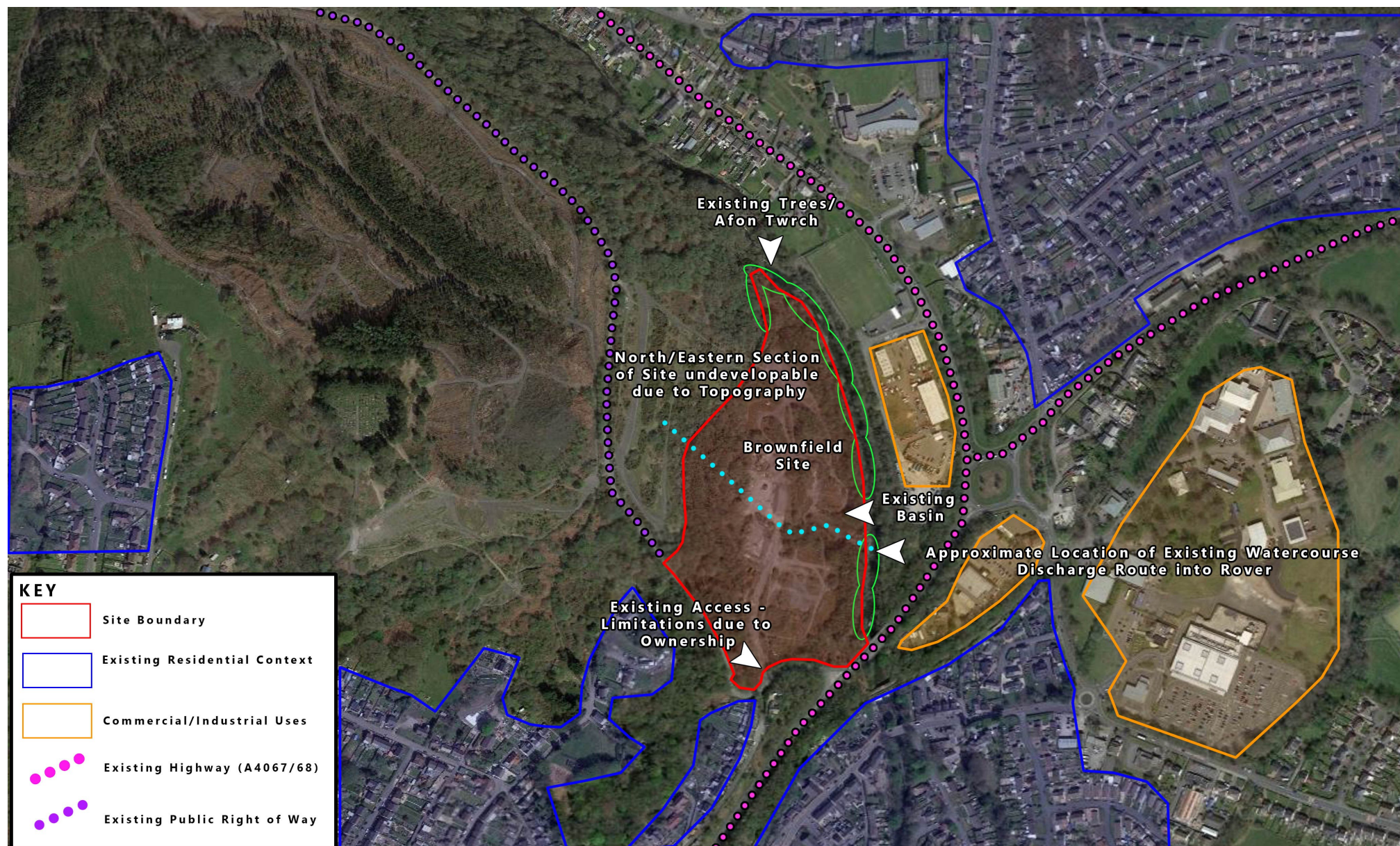
- 24no. Walk Up Flats (House Type 2.1.1);
- 34no. Two-Bed Houses (House Type 4.2.1);
- 36no. Three-Bed Houses (House Type 5.3.1);
- 10no. Four-Bed Houses (House Type 7.4.1);

Careful consideration will be given to the constraints on site, including the presence of any underground workings associated with the sites coal mining history, the topography of the site, and the ecological related constraints such as protected species and tree coverage.

The proposed development will be more commensurate within the immediate surrounding area in respect of its scale. Details of the associated layout, appearance, landscaping and car parking will be analysed at the Reserved Matters.

In order to achieve the vision, a planning application will be submitted to Neath Port Talbot Council, representing a sizeable contribution to the Local Authority's housing requirements.

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS



INTERPRETATION

The concept for the development of the site has derived from the following:

- Full site analysis including a full desktop study of the site and its surroundings;
- A site visit and general visual assessment of the surrounding area; and,
- Discussions with the client and a full understanding of the brief and vision of the project.

The above steps have presented the key opportunities and constraints for the site, which are outlined below:

Opportunities

Brownfield Land - previously developed land should, wherever possible, be used in preference to greenfield sites where it is suitable for development.

Site Ownership - the site is wholly under the ownership of the applicant, Mr Robert Maggs

Sustainable Location - the site is considered to be located within a sustainable location and is well connected to a number of shops, services and facilities.

Housing Need - great opportunity to fulfil the housing needs in Neath Port Talbot.

Public Transport - public transport surrounds the site, with a bus stop within close proximity connecting the area to Neath, Port Talbot and Swansea.

Vacant Site - the site is vacant and lies in a dilapidated state. The proposal will bring the application site back into effective use, along with significant visual enhancements.

Existing Infrastructure/Utilities - given the previous use of

the site, utilities are present.

Visual Amenity - the topography of the land lends itself in reducing the visual impact the development will have on adjacent uses. Proposed dwellings will be designed with the topography in mind to ensure that visual impact is kept to a minimum.

Existing Trees - a large proportion of existing tree coverage on the boundaries of the site will act as a buffer between any existing uses and the proposed development.

Constraints

Existing Site Access - the applicant does not have control over the Haul Road presenting limitations to the site access.

Residential Receptors - existing dwellings are located within close proximity to the south and west however do not lie immediately adjacent to the site.

Site Investigation - a number of disused mineshafts/adits are located either within the application site or within close proximity to its boundary. Careful consideration will be given to the exact location of these to ensure any development is situated in a safe location.

Biodiversity - there is a watercourse SINC along the eastern site boundary and an Ancient Woodland SINC located to the north of the site.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY



Planning Policy Overview

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this Planning Application comprises the following:

- National Development Framework: Future Wales - The National Plan 2040 (February, 2021);
- Neath Port Talbot Council Local Development Plan (adopted January, 2016).

In addition to the Development Plan, the Planning Application has been informed by policy and guidance set out in the following:

- Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (December, 2018), informed by The Well -Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and supplemented by Technical Advice Notes;
- Building Better Places: The Planning System Delivering Resilient and Brighter Futures (July, 2020);
- Neath Port Talbot Council Supplementary Planning Guidance.

This section of the DAS provides an overview of the Development Plan context and planning policy framework of specific relevance to the determination of this application. For ease of reference, this overview is set out below at the national and local level.

National Level

The Well -Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Well -Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (which came into force on 1st April 2016) requires “*public bodies to do things in pursuit of the economic, social, environmental and cultural well -being of Wales in a way that accords with the sustainable development principle*”. The Act

sets out seven ‘well -being’ goals as follows:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsive Wales

Within the Act, sustainable development is defined as follows: “*the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well -being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals*”. The Act sets out that when making decisions, public bodies need to take into account the impact they could have on people living in Wales in the future and must apply the sustainable development principle in all decisions.

National Development Framework: Future Wales – The National Plan 2040

The National Development Framework: Future Wales – the National Plan 2040 was published on 24th February 2021. ‘Future Wales’ sets out the Welsh Government’s strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy; achieving decarbonisation and climate -resilience; developing strong ecosystems; and improving the health and well -being of our communities. As stated above, the National Development Framework has Development Plan status.

Future Wales sets out its overarching ambitions based on the national planning principles and national sustainable placemaking outcomes set out in Planning Policy Wales by means of 11 Outcomes. The 11 Outcomes are collectively a statement of where the Welsh Government aspire Wales to be in 20 years’ time which are as follows:

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY



A Wales where people live:

- 1....and work in connected, inclusive and healthy places
- 2....in vibrant rural places with access to homes, jobs and services
- 3.... in distinctive regions that tackle health and socio-economic inequality through sustainable growth
- 4....in places with a thriving Welsh Language
- 5....and work in towns and cities which are a focus and spring-board for sustainable growth
- 6....in places where prosperity, innovation and culture are promoted
- 7....in places where travel is sustainable
8. in places with world-class digital infrastructure
- 9....in places that sustainably manage their natural resources and reduce pollution
- 10....in places with biodiverse, resilient and connected ecosystems
- 11....in places which are decarbonised and climate-resilient

Placemaking

Placemaking forms a key concept upon which many national planning policies are based. "Placemaking is at the heart of the planning system in Wales and this policy establishes a strategic placemaking approach and principles to support planning authorities to shape urban growth and regeneration".

Policy 2 of Future Wales is of key relevance in terms of placemaking, which states the following:

Policy 2 - Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration - Strategic Placemaking

The growth and regeneration of towns and cities should positively contribute towards building sustainable places that support active and healthy lives, with urban neighbourhoods that are compact and walkable, organised around mixed-use centres and public transport, and integrated with green infra-

structure. Urban growth and regeneration should be based on the following strategic placemaking principles:

- *creating a rich mix of uses;*
- *providing a variety of housing types and tenures;*
- *building places at a walkable scale, with homes, local facilities and public transport within walking distance of each other;*
- *increasing population density, with development built at urban densities that can support public transport and local facilities; establishing a permeable network of streets, with a hierarchy that informs the nature of development;*
- *promoting a plot-based approach to development, which provides opportunities for the development of small plots, including for custom and self-builders; and*
- *integrating green infrastructure, informed by the planning authority's Green Infrastructure Assessment.*

Policy 12 of Future Wales relates to Regional Connectivity and is of key relevance to this scheme. The policy states that:

"Planning authorities must act to reduce levels of car parking in urban areas, including supporting car-free developments in accessible locations"

"Planning authorities should also challenge perceptions that housing needs to be built with parking on plots, which promotes car-dominated developments, and promote different ways of dealing with cars that encourage a reduction in car use and increase active travel and use of public transport."

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12 was published in February 2024. The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environ-

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

mental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Sustainable Development is defined at Page 7 of PPW as follows: *"the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the well-being goals"*.

Paragraph 1.18 set out that *"Legislation secures a presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise to ensure that social, economic, cultural and environmental issues are balanced and integrated"*.

Placemaking

In accordance with the National Development Framework, placemaking is also at the heart of PPW – Paragraph 2.1 for example states that *"Everyone engaged with or operating within the planning system in Wales must embrace the concept of placemaking in both plan making and development management decisions in order to achieve the creation of sustainable places and improve the well-being of communities"*.

It is summarised succinctly at Paragraph 2.3 that *"The planning system should create sustainable places which are attractive, sociable, accessible, active, secure, welcoming, healthy and friendly. Development proposals should create the conditions to bring people together, making them want to live, work and play in areas with a sense of place and well-being, creating prosperity for all"*.

Placemaking is defined at Page 14 of PPW as follows: *"Placemaking is a holistic approach to the planning and design of development and spaces, focused on positive outcomes. It draws upon an area's potential to create high quality develop-*

ment and public spaces that promote people's prosperity, health, happiness, and well being in the widest sense. Placemaking considers the context, function and relationships between a development site and its wider surroundings".

A set of 'national sustainable placemaking outcomes' are outlined within PPW, which it advises should be used to inform the assessment of development proposals. The national outcomes are defined as follows:

- *Creating and Sustaining Communities*
 - * *Enables the Welsh language to thrive*
 - * *Appropriate development densities*
 - * *Homes and jobs to meet society's needs*
 - * *A mix of uses*
 - * *Offers cultural experiences*
 - * *Community based facilities and services*
- *Making Best Use of Resources*
 - * *Make best use of natural resources*
 - * *Prevents waste*
 - * *Prioritises the use of previously developed land and existing buildings*
 - * *Unlocks potential and regenerates*
 - * *High quality and built to last*
- *Maximising Environmental Protection and Limiting*

Environmental Impact

- * *Resilient biodiversity and ecosystems*
- * *Distinctive and special landscapes*
- * *Integrated green infrastructure*
- * *Appropriate soundscapes*
- * *Reduces environmental risks*
- * *Manages water resources naturally*
- * *Clean air*
- * *Reduces overall pollution*
- * *Resilient to climate change*
- * *Distinctive and special historic environments*
- *Growing Our Economy in a Sustainable Manner*
 - * *Fosters economic activity*
 - * *Enables easy communication*
 - * *Generates its own renewable energy*
 - * *Vibrant and dynamic*
 - * *Adaptive to change*
 - * *Embraces smart and innovative technology*
- *Facilitating Accessible and Healthy Environments*

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- * Accessible and high quality green space
- * Accessible b means of active travel and public transport
- * Not car dependent
- * Minimises the need to travel
- * Provides equality of access
- * Feels safe and inclusive
- * Supports a diverse population
- * Good connections
- * Convenient access to goods and services

It is highlighted at Paragraph 2.20 that *“Not every development or policy proposal will be able to demonstrate they can meet all of these outcomes, neither can it necessarily be proved at the application or policy stage that an attribute of a proposal will necessarily lead to a specific outcome. However, this does not mean that they should not be considered in the development management process to see if a proposal can be improved or enhanced to promote wider well-being”*.

The implication of COVID are highlighted in PPW 12 with Paragraph 2.22 stating for example that *“We must ensure that a post-Covid world has people’s well-being at its heart. Planning Policy Wales leads the way in this respect and contains the principles and policies needed for us to recover from this situation in a positive manner”*.

Good Design

The importance of good design in development proposals is highlighted at Paragraph 3.3 of PPW where it is stated that *“Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise. Design is not just about the architecture of a building but the relationship between all elements of the natural and built environment and between people and places. To achieve sustainable development, design must go beyond aesthetics and include the social, economic, environmental, cultural aspects of the development, including how space is used, how buildings and the public realm support this use, as well as its construction, operation, management, and its relationship with the surrounding area”*.

Good design must enable development proposals to address the issues of inclusivity and accessibility for all, and it is highlighted at Paragraph 3.6 that *“This includes making provision to meet the needs of people with sensory, memory, learning and mobility impairments, older people and people with young children...Good design can also encourage people to meet and interact with each other, helping to address issues surrounding loneliness. Good design must also involve the provision of measures that help to reduce the inequality of access to essential services, education and employment experienced by people without access to a car. Design measures and features should enable easy access to services by walking, cycling and public transport”*.

In addition, it is highlighted that good design promotes environmental sustainability and contributes to the achievement of the well-being goals - Paragraph 3.7 states for example that *“Developments should seek to maximise energy efficiency and the efficient use of other resources (including land), maximise sustainable movement, minimise the use of non-renewable resources, encourage decarbonisation and prevent the generation of waste and pollution”*.

The importance of good design in term of ensuring high environmental quality is set out at Paragraph 3.8: *“Landscape and green infrastructure considerations are an integral part of the design process. Integrating green infrastructure is not limited to focusing on landscape and ecology, rather, consideration should be given to all features of the natural environment and how these functions together to contribute toward the quality of places”*.

Paragraph 3.12 outlines that good design is also about avoiding the creation of car-based developments by minimising the need to travel and reliance on the car, whilst maximising opportunities for people to make sustainable and healthy travel choices for their daily journeys. It is stated that *“Achieving these objectives requires the selection of sites which can be made easily accessible by sustainable modes as well as incorporating appropriate, safe and sustainable links (including active travel networks) within and between developments using legal agreements where appropriate”*.

Sustainable Transport

PPW advises at Paragraph 4.1.10 that the planning system has a key role to play in reducing the need to travel, particularly by private car, and supporting sustainable transport, by facilitating developments which:

- “are sited in the right locations, where they can be easily accessed by sustainable modes of travel and without the need for a car;
- are designed in a way which integrates them with existing land uses and neighbourhoods; and
- make it possible for all short journeys within and beyond the development to be easily made by walking and cycling”.

Paragraph 4.1.11 summarises that: *“Development proposals must seek to maximise accessibility by walking, cycling and*

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

public transport, by prioritising the provision of appropriate on-site infrastructure and, where necessary, mitigating transport impacts through the provision of off-site measures, such as the development of active travel routes, bus priority infrastructure and financial support for public transport services”.

It is Welsh Government policy to require the use of a sustainable transport hierarchy in relation to new development, which prioritises walking, cycling and public transport ahead of the private motor vehicles. Paragraph 4.1.13 sets out that *“The sustainable transport hierarchy should be used to reduce the need to travel, prevent car-dependent developments in unsustainable locations, and support the delivery of schemes located, designed and supported by infrastructure which prioritises access and movement by active and sustainable transport”.*

Active Travel

The importance of developing local active travel networks to help mitigate the impact of new development by providing an alternative mode of travel to the private car is highlighted in PPW. It is stated at Paragraph 4.1.30 that *“Provision for active travel must be an essential component of development schemes and planning authorities must ensure new developments are designed and integrated with existing settlements and networks, in a way which makes active travel a practical, safe and attractive choice”.*

Public Transport

PPW advises that the availability of public transport is an important part of ensuring a place is sustainable. Paragraph 4.1.36 highlights that the planning system should facilitate this *“by locating development where there is, or can be, good access by public transport”.*

Housing

It is set out at Paragraph 4.2.1 that *“New housing development in both urban and rural areas should incorporate a mix of mar-*

ket and affordable house types, tenures and sizes to cater for the range of identified housing needs and contribute to the development of sustainable and cohesive communities”.

Green Infrastructure

The importance of green infrastructure is highlighted throughout PPW. It is summarised at Paragraph 6.2.4 that *“Green infrastructure plays a fundamental role in shaping places and our sense of well-being, and is intrinsic to the quality of the spaces we live, work and play in. The planning system must maximise its contribution to the protection and provision of green infrastructure assets and networks as part of meeting society’s wider social and economic objectives and the needs of local communities.*

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

The importance of considering SuDS as an integral part of the development process is highlighted at Paragraph 6.6.18 of PPW where it is stated that *“The provision of SuDS must be considered at the earliest possible stage when formulating proposals for new development”.* It is advised at Paragraph 6.6.19 that *“Design for multiple benefits and green infrastructure should be secured wherever possible and as part of Green Infrastructure Assessments suitable approaches towards the provision of SuDS should be identified”.*

In terms of trees, Paragraph 6.4.44 notes that *“The protection and planting of trees and hedgerows should be delivered, where appropriate, through locally-specific strategies and policies, through imposing conditions when granting planning permission, and/or by making Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) They should also be incorporated into Green Infrastructure Assessments and plans.”*

Technical Advice Notes

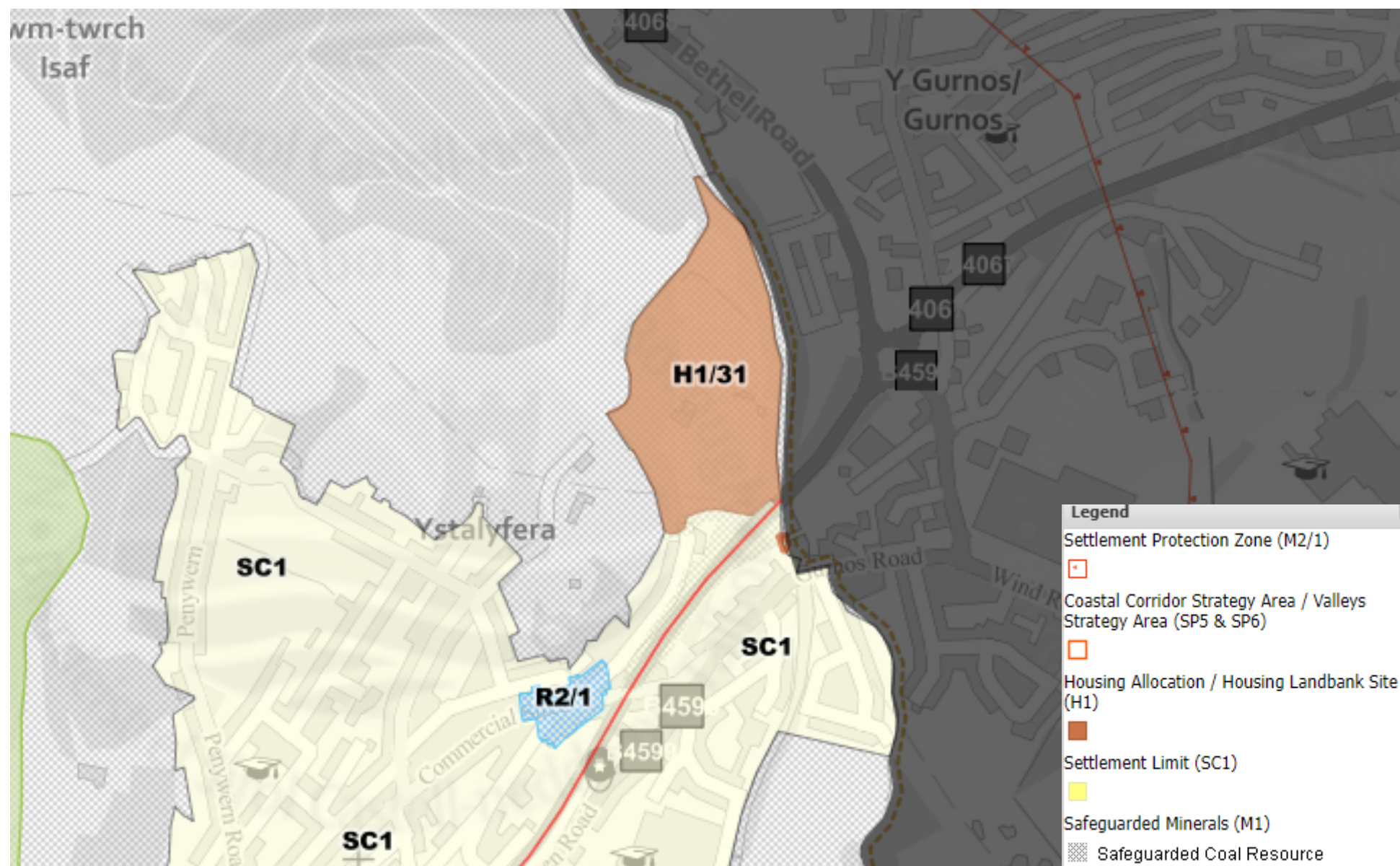
Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by various Technical Advice Notes (TAN’s) which provide more in-depth guidance

on specific issues. In this instance, guidance contained in

- TAN 2 Planning and Affordable Housing (2006)
- TAN 5 Nature Conservation and Planning (2009)
- TAN 12 Design (2016)
- TAN 18 Transport (2007)

The suitability of the proposals in this design context are demonstrated in this Design and Access Statement.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY



LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Policy Ref	Policy Name
SP1	Climate Change
SP2	Health
SP3	Sustainable Communities
SP4	Infrastructure
SP10	Open Space
SP16	Environmental Protection
SP19	Waste Management
SP20	Transport Network
SC1	Settlement Limits
I1	Infrastructure Requirements
OS1	Open Space Provision
W3	Waste Management in New Development
TR1	Transport Proposals
TR2	Design and Access of New Development
BE1	Design
WL1	Development in Language Sensitive Areas
TO4	Walking and Cycling Routes
EN6	Important Biodiversity and Geodiversity Sites
EN7	Important Natural Features
RE2	Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Development

Local Level

Neath Port Talbot Council Local Development Plan

The Neath Port Talbot Council Local Development Plan was adopted in 2016 and is the prevailing development plan for the County. As identified on the LDP proposals map (page 18), the site is allocated for housing under Policy H1/31.

The LDP policies considered relevant in the context of the proposed development are contained within the table on the left.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

The following SPG documents are considered to be relevant to this application:

- Planning Obligations (October 2016)
- Parking Standards (October 2016)
- Pollution (October 2016)
- Open Space & Greenspace (July 2017)
- Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (July 2017)
- Design (July 2017)
- Biodiversity and Geodiversity (May 2018)
- Transport Network (October 2016)
- Development and the Welsh Language (July 2017)

DESIGN EVOLUTION

Initial Concept Design

This section of the PDAS describes the design evolution of the scheme in a way that can be read both by professionals and the public.

An initial scheme was developed by Prime Architecture in preparation for pre-application discussions with the LPA. The scheme comprised 70no residential dwellings.

The scheme utilised the existing access from the Haul Road to the west, with an internal highway running directly across the site.

The design team undertook further investigation at the site to understand the developable and undevelopable areas, which led to the scheme being amended further before submitting a pre-application enquiry to Neath Port Talbot Council.



DESIGN EVOLUTION

Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) Layout

Following the comments received by the LPA during pre-application discussions, the scheme was reviewed accordingly in preparation for PAC to ensure that the site layout addresses the key constraints.

As shown on the layout plan (right) which accompanies the PAC, the number of dwellings was reduced from 138 to 104, although the description remained at up to 160 dwellings. This reduction was influenced by various site constraints. Some of the key changes to the layout are as follows:

- introduction of a large attenuation pond to the south of the site to serve the entire site. The SuDS feature has been located at the location of an existing watercourse, infilled settlement pond and basin.
- the principal access into the site has been relocated, off the A4067 to the south subject to ownership limitations of the existing access off the Haul Road.
- as a result of the above, the internal highway has been subject to reconfiguration, largely dictated by the site levels. The road levels comply with highway standards.
- introduction of a large pumping station at the entrance of the site, a requirement of Neath Port Talbot Council.
- relocation of onsite LEAP from the centre of the site, to the west to ensure that it meets the minimum size requirement of the Council.



THE PROPOSAL

Overview

The proposal seeks outline planning permission for up to 160 no. residential dwellings with associated access, car parking and landscaping works at the former Tirbach Washery, Ystalyfera. All matters except for means of access are being reserved for future consideration.

Access and Movement

As shown on the plans included with this pre-application consultation, a formalised access point into the site is proposed at the southern boundary off the A4067. The new access point will serve all of the proposed dwellings via a newly constructed internal access road. Precise details of the internal access road will be confirmed as part of any future the Reserved Matters application when the exact layout is known.

The new access is proposed to create and improve pedestrian links between the site and local services within the area. The site access drawing demonstrates the proposed shared pedestrian/cycle facility at the new junction, as well as the improved footway which connects into the existing pedestrian infrastructure along the A4067 to improve permeability for pedestrians and cyclists at this location.

Car parking will be proposed in the form of driveways on site to avoid on street parking within the development. As shown on the indicative supporting layout each plot has room for up to 2 parking spaces. This is considered to be an appropriate level of provision relative to the scale of the proposal. Whilst the indicative layout demonstrates that the site is capable of being appropriately designed in this manner, the exact layout is reserved for future consideration. Notwithstanding, it is considered that the proposed 2 car spaces per plot complies with Neath Port Talbot's Parking Standards.

In respect of public transport, there is currently a shortfall along the A4067, which mainly acts as a distributor road cut-

ting through Ystalyfera. Therefore, improving permeability through the introduction of a shared pedestrian/cycle facility at this location is critical to help encourage sustainable travel patterns.

The closest bus stops to the site are located to the south, on Gurnos Road and along the access road to Home Bargains, next to the A4067. The following services call at these bus stops:

- Service 62 (Gurnos - Coelbren) - Two daily
- Service 121 (Ystradgynlais - Ystalyfera) - Hourly
- Service 903 (Neath College - Abercrave) - School service

The Travel Plan will be regularly reviewed, reflecting that a Travel Plan is a continuous process for improvement, requiring monitoring and revision to ensure it remains relevant and effective. The Travel Plan will next be fully revised five years from its date of implementation.

Character

The innate characteristic of the site is its ability to produce a distinctive residential community which will feel to be within a wooded glade. Due to the sites tree coverage, topography and former mining history, not all of the site will be developable land. Leaving much of the area undeveloped will create a strong setting of a very different sort; a 'glade' feel to be shared by everyone.

Amount, Scale and Layout

The proposal comprises an outline application for up to 160o. residential units. As shown on the layout schedule, the proposal currently seeks to provide a mixture of house types, including walk-up flats, in addition to 2, 3 and 4 bed houses.

Despite only showing 104 dwellings on the architectural lay-

out, this application seeks planning consent for up to 160 dwellings which is the quantum of development the site has been allocated within the adopted LDP under Policy H1 (Housing Sites). The layout presented is only indicative, and the key purpose of the outline application is to establish the principle of residential development.

As the application is only seeking outline consent with all matters reserved except access, details of design are not required and will instead be agreed at Reserved Matters stage. However, the approximate scale parameters of the proposed dwellings will be as follows:

House Type 2.1.1 (Walk Up Flats)

- ⇒ Width - 7.5m - 9m
- ⇒ Length - 8m - 11.5m
- ⇒ Height - 8.5m - 12.5m

House Type 4.2.1 (Two Bedroom House)

- ⇒ Width - 7.5m - 9m
- ⇒ Length - 8m - 11.5m
- ⇒ Height - 8.5m - 12.5m

House Type 5.3.1 (Three Bedroom House)

- ⇒ Width - 7.5m - 9m
- ⇒ Length - 8m - 12m
- ⇒ Height - 8.5m - 12.5m

THE PROPOSAL

House Type 7.4.1 (Four Bedroom House)

- ⇒ Width - 8.5m - 12.5m
- ⇒ Length - 8m - 11.5m
- ⇒ Height - 8.5m - 12.5m

It is considered that given the nature of the site and surroundings, the proposed scale of the dwellings will fit with the character of the surrounding area.

Whilst the layout of the development is a reserved matter, the indicative layout provided demonstrates that the site is capable of accommodating sufficient distance from existing residential properties maintaining their amenity and privacy. The layout/orientation of the proposed development has been carefully considered as to minimise the impact of the development upon the few adjacent dwellings to the south-west, as well as considering the constraints present on-site. Overall it is considered that any potential constraints in terms of the layout can be mitigated for through the detailed design process.

Appearance

The appearance of the proposal is a reserved matter as such will be considered in any subsequent RM application. Despite this it is considered that the proposal can be designed in a manner that is in keeping with the surrounding character and appearance.

Landscaping and Biodiversity

Landscaping is a critical element of placemaking, which this proposal considers strongly. PPW12 and Neath Port Talbot Council policies emphasise that incorporating established ecological features into scheme design can contribute to the unique sense of place of an area or settlement. Retaining existing features into new developments helps to create places that are distinct and soften the impact of change by creating a sense of continuity that acknowledges local identity.

The landscaping of the site is a reserved matter as such will be considered in any subsequent RM application. Landscape planting will provide an overall positive impact on the biodiversity value of a site and the local area. An appropriate scheme of ecological enhancements can be secured as part of any subsequent reserved matters submission.

The Ecology Report that supports this application identifies that the site is predominantly of previously developed land, colonised by a mixed scrub and ephemeral/short perennial vegetation, with large areas of hardstanding and bare ground with broad-leaved woodland forming a central belt and a riparian corridor along the eastern boundary.

On this basis, the site is considered suitable for a number of protected species, such as badgers, otters (riparian zone only) and reptiles. The woodland and scrub form an extensive area for bird nesting, however no signs of European protected species were encountered on the site.

Community Safety

TAN 12 suggests that community safety can be achieved via design solutions that can aid crime prevention. These include providing natural surveillance, improving safety by reducing conflicts in uses, and promoting a sense of ownership and responsibility.

It is considered that the site could be developed to reduce concealed areas that are not overlooked. Importantly this includes all areas of car parking which will be appropriately lit and naturally overlooked.

Community Involvement

In accordance with Part 1A of the 'Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedures) (Wales) (Amended) Order 2016' (DMPO 2016), all major developments are required to be subject of pre-application consulta-

tion, prior to the Planning Application being validated by the Local Planning Authority.

A full comprehensive summary of the pre-application consultation is to be included within the accompanying pre-application consultation report, following responses received by statutory consultees as well as local councillors and residents.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental sustainability is one of the key principles within the 7 Wellbeing Goals. The proposed development has encouraged sustainable practices. Primarily, the proposed development will entail the construction of a residential development of an appropriate scale on brownfield land.

A key objective is to provide cost and value in new homes, and to develop housing that meets specific current and future housing needs. Additionally, it is envisaged that the development will help to tackle poverty by providing homes which are more energy efficient and cheaper to run.

Further to the above, the site is considered to be located in a sustainable location with numerous services located locally. Pedestrian connectivity and permeability to these services will be improved as part of the development proposals.

THE PROPOSAL

Other Technical Information

Following preparatory work, a number of technical constraints have been identified at the site.

Trees

A Tree Constraints Plan was produced by ArbTS, which categorises the quality of trees on-site to establish which trees need to be retained and which trees would be unsuitable for retention as part of the development proposals.

The Tree constraints plan shows that the site comprises primarily Category B (Desirable for retention) along the sites eastern and western boundaries, with the trees comprising a mix of Goat Willow, Common Alder, Silver Birch, Beech, Pine, Sycamore, Downy Birch, Ash, Common Oak and Hazel.

The plan identifies several clusters of Category C Trees (Those of low quality and optional for retention) along the northern and southern boundaries as well as centrally within the site. These comprise a mix of Sycamore, Great Willow, Silver Birch, Downy Birch, Elder, Common Alder, Sessile Oak and Goat willow.

Removal of the Category C trees would create a central development with retained trees on the eastern and western boundaries, providing a natural buffer between the site and adjacent uses.

Site Investigation

A geo-environmental report was produced by Blandford Consulting, to consider whether or not any sampling of soils underlying the Site is required to determine if they present a risk to any recognised receptors.

The report concluded that there are no drains crossing the Site and there are no bodies of standing water on the Site. The site is shown not to lie on an indicative fluvial flood plain, and no

further action needs to be taken place. The Site, itself, lies on ground which is classed as a minor aquifer which is overlain with a mixture of locally derived soils, River Alluvium and Made Ground likely to be colliery spoil.

In addition, the report identifies that there is a significant risk of contaminants being present in the soils and further Site Investigation analysis should be undertaken.

Following on from the above, Blandford Consulting produced a Site Investigation Report, considering the geological and mining context of the Site and the history of the locality, as well as discussing the findings of the Site Investigation.

The report concluded that water and soil samples showed that there is very little contamination present in surface water, and very little contamination becomes free under forced leaching conditions. It concludes that there is no significant risk to any sensitive groundwater receptor from the soils at the Site.

In terms of contaminated soils, the report concludes that most of the contaminants present in the soil are at concentrations that are not considered to pose a risk to human health. Some, however, are present at concentrations that are considered to pose a risk to human health (arsenic, mercury, lead and several PAHs) and it is recommended that a geotextile grid/membrane be placed on top of the existing soils and covered with at least 600mm of clean topsoil.

Ecology

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken by I&G Consulting to outline the ecological constraints/opportunities associated with the site.

The appraisal describes that the site is suitable for a number of protected animal species, principally Badgers, Otters

(riparian zone only) and reptiles. The woodland and scrub form an extensive area for bird testing.

No signs of European protected species were encountered on the site, however non-native invasive species were noted.

I&G Consulting were also instructed to undertake a Reptile survey, following a request for one to be undertaken by the Local Planning Authority Ecologist. The report provides a summary of the reptile survey that was undertaken between September and October 2019.

The land within the larger site boundary (expanding outside of the red-line) consists predominantly of previously developed land, and colonised by a mixed scrub and ephemeral/short perennial vegetation, with large areas of hardstanding and bare ground with broad-leaved woodland forming a central belt and a riparian corridor along the eastern boundary.

The report describes that the only species to be seen during the surveys were Amphibians (common frog and toad), and mammals (wood mice and common shrew). No reptiles were observed during the checks.

Although the survey did not record the presence of Reptiles, it is advised that a Precautionary Approach be taken and mitigation measured for loss of habitat and site clearance should be undertaken.

PERSPECTIVE DRAWING - SITE PLAN



PERSPECTIVE DRAWINGS



PERSPECTIVE DRAWINGS



CONCLUSION

This PDAS has been prepared on behalf of Mr Robert Maggs in support of an outline planning application for the redevelopment of the former Tirbach Washery comprising the construction of up to 160 residential dwellings and associated infrastructure works. As well as its former use, the site has been more recently used as a training facility for those using off-road and commercial vehicles.

The site forms part of Housing Allocation H1/31 in Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's Local Development Plan and, therefore, the principle of residential development at this location is established.

It has been established that the sites comprises beneficial re-use of brownfield land which will lead to the creation of a development of much higher design quality, and it represents one which is more commensurate with the surrounding villages of Ystalyfera and Gurnos.

It has been established that the site is situated in a sustainable location, with access to essential services and facilities, and public transport links.

The outline planning application is supported by a concept masterplan as well as technical supporting documents, illustrating that the site is capable of accommodating the development and its associated works.

In light of the above, it is concluded that the proposal fully accords with both national and local policies and there are no material considerations which should prevent the planning application from being determined in accordance with the relevant planning policy framework.